

CHAPTER 5: COMMENTS AND COORDINATION

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and appropriate public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process to determine the scope of environmental documentation, the level of analysis, potential impacts and mitigation measures, and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including: project development team meetings, interagency coordination meetings, a public open house, newsletters, a project hotline and project website, and a formal public hearing. This chapter summarizes the results of UDOT's efforts to identify, address and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

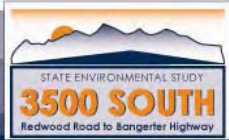
5.1 SCOPING

The State of Utah allocated funding through the Centennial Highway Fund to improve 3500 South between Redwood Road and Bangerter Highway. UDOT is the lead agency conducting the study in association with UTA, WVC, and WFRC, each of whom are responsible for certain activities on the 3500 South corridor.

Project scoping and coordination efforts for the SES began when the Carter & Burgess consultant team met with UDOT on October 20, 2005 to discuss the anticipated needs and timeline for the study. Scoping continued on December 12, 2005 with the participation of representatives from agencies involved in the previous DEIS. These included: UDOT, UTA, WFRC, West Valley City, Fehr and Peers Transportation Consultants, Carter & Burgess, Inc., and URS Corporation (see **Appendix C** for **Scoping Meeting Minutes**). Representatives reviewed the guidelines for the new study and discussed the responsibilities of each group or agency participating in the SES process. Discussions revolved around the regulations and guidelines changing from a federal process (DEIS) to a state process (SES). The SES will still be studied with the principles of CSS and NEPA to minimize environmental impacts. Conclusions were made regarding the inclusion of BRT as a part of this study and the involvement of West Valley City and UTA was determined to be highly important.

5.2 PUBLIC AGENCY COORDINATION

Collaboration with the West Valley City Planning and Community and Economic Development departments (CED), UTA, and the WFRC began at the onset of the SES scoping process and was ongoing throughout the duration of the study. These agencies offered suggestions for improving proposed alternatives and were active in creating the funding plans and phasing for the preferred alternative. Additionally, discussions shared during a February 23, 2006 meeting with the project team, West Valley City Public Works, Fire, and Police departments contributed to the development and refinement of alternatives (see **Appendix C**). Participants in this meeting offered insight to issues and needs specific



to public and service vehicles. On February 27, 2006 the project team met with WVC to discuss the preferred alternative and potential right-of-way issues (see **Appendix C**).

5.2.1 Agency Comments

UTA participated in a number of meetings and phone conversations and was active in promoting the accommodation of a new BRT service and better transit facilities for the existing bus service on 3500 South. Although BRT facilities will not be part of this 3500 South reconstruction project, the necessary right-of-way to build one in the future is included with the preferred alternative. This element of the preferred alternative is a direct result of the participation of UTA. UTA provided graphics and site plans to assist UDOT in developing its plans identifying alignment and infrastructure needs.

West Valley City played a vital role in creating the elements of the preferred alternative. Through meetings, email, and phone correspondence, city representatives helped to choose alignment and design features for the preferred alternative. Through negotiations with UDOT, the city will fund to bury the power and telephone lines as a betterment of the 3500 South project alternative. West Valley City's CED director submitted a letter to the UDOT Region 2 manager on behalf of the West Valley City CED department. In his letter, the director specified the overall project direction preferred by the city as well as specific activities thought to enhance the project outcome and its impacts on the city (see **Appendix D**).

5.2.1 Emergency Responders Comments

Comments and coordination with the emergency response teams in West Valley City were important in creating an alternative that considered all emergency travel needs on 3500 South. As the major connection to other area roadways and the only direct, primary access to the city's hospital, more people rely on 3500 South than just those who access it for shopping and work. With these considerations in mind, UDOT invited emergency officials and public works personnel to discuss issues such as preemptive signalization that would allow emergency vehicles to get through intersections quickly, lane restrictions during construction, snow plows and street cleaning, and the possibility of transit lanes being accessible to responders during emergencies. Support offered by the city and fire officials lent to the viability of the preferred alternative. Discussions are summarized below. Meeting minutes area available in **Appendix C**.

Restriction of center-turn lane

There could be increased difficulty getting to the location of an accident. Emergency vehicles will either have to make a u-turn or plan an alternate approach if the accident site is not in the same direction of travel as that of the emergency vehicle. Police and Fire representatives (hereafter *Police* and *Fire*) said they will be able to adjust to new roadway

conditions. They will treat the 3500 South corridor similarly to freeways and other roadways with raised medians.

Police and Fire were open to working with UTA to allow emergency vehicles access to BRT lanes during emergency situations. UTA said that they are open to this idea and don't expect it would create problems with communication and training. The width of the planned bus median would be sufficiently large enough for a fire truck, police car, or ambulance to drive in the median, even with a bus parked to the side. Buses are planned to run with only 15 minute headways which would reduce the number of potential conflicts.

Raised Medians

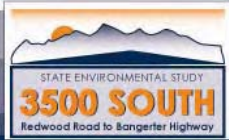
The Public Works department of West Valley City participated in discussions about maintenance and specific responsibilities the city has in taking care of the streets. Raised medians would not affect their ability to continue care of the roadway. Street plows would also be able to enter BRT lanes and remove the snow from the driving lanes.

5.3 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Comments, concerns, and questions about the project were encouraged throughout the study. These were received by the project team through participation at the Open House held in January 2006, the Public Hearing held in April 2006, the project website, project hotline, by mail, and during informally scheduled meetings (see **Appendix D** and **E**). The majority of comments came from business owners or commercial tenants. When requested, a response was either mailed or emailed back to the commenter. Most comments and questions were solicited from the public and from agencies in order to enhance the study process and develop a more holistic preferred alternative. The comments indicated that many people shared similar concerns. Common themes and comments are summarized below and followed by the answer or response given by the project team.

5.3.1 Business Meeting

Members of the UDOT project team held an informal meeting on January 11, 2006 to discuss the 3500 South study with members of the business community in and around the study area. Some business owners and tenants east of Redwood Road expressed concerns about the potential impacts of improvements on 3500 South. Although they would not be directly affected by new alignments or improvements because their properties are located outside of the study area, they were concerned about the potential right-of-way acquisitions and potential impacts related to construction. The UDOT representatives reviewed the alternatives and impacts specific to the study area and showed that there will be minimal impacts east of Redwood Road. Improvements east of Redwood Road will include only those made at the intersection.



5.3.2 Public Comments

The public submitted comments during the 3500 South SES process by mail, email, fax, in person, or over the telephone. Each was reviewed, considered, and incorporated into the final decision making process. Many residents and business owners shared concerns about similar issues. Nine categories were created to summarize the majority the comments. These categories are listed below followed by a summary of comments and responses. The full list of comments can be found in **Appendix D** and **E**. **Appendix D** includes all comments relating to the January 2006 Open House where **Appendix E** contains all comments that were submitted regarding information presented at the April 2006 Public Hearing. A court reporter was scheduled to be available to formally receive comments at the Public Hearing. Despite the absence of the court reporter, an opportunity was given at the Public Hearing to give or submit comments, however none were received. A letter detailing the cause for the reporter's absence at the meeting is included in **Appendix E**.

Access:

What will happen to left turn access? I am worried that restricting left turns could be detrimental to my business.

Crashes resulting from left turn movements are a major concern within the study area. National and regional research differs about the safety of turn medians. Local research supports keeping the center turn lane on roadways similar to 3500 South. UDOT will closely evaluate the consequences of both keeping and removing the center median. The preferred alternative will be based on choosing roadway elements that provide the greatest levels of safety and mobility with the least possible impacts. West Valley City is committed to the success of its business community and is actively participating in the development of an alternative that will promote commercial activity in this area.

Consider the need for large vehicles such as trucks and RVs to access businesses.

The project team understands the need to consider commercial truck traffic in this corridor. There should be little change in the ability for trucks to maneuver through the corridor and access driveways and loading areas. If the preferred alternative includes removing the center turn lane, there could be some impact to drivers but accessibility will not be eliminated for any vehicles. Travel patterns will likely more closely resemble those on similar commercial corridors where left turns are prohibited for most of the roadway.

What happens if my property is not shown as a right-of-way taking but the impacts to my parking make it impossible to continue operating my business?

Parking impacts will be evaluated after final design and during the appraisal process. At that time negotiations between UDOT and the property owners will determine what compensation will be given for the loss of parking and whether or not a reconfiguration will be sufficient for parking needs or if a relocation will be necessary.

What will happen to the access and driveways to businesses on 3500 South?

UDOT does not intend to close accesses. The location of the existing driveways may vary slightly depending on the final design, but the property owners will be involved and have input on all design changes to their property. If an access is closed, the property owners will be compensated through the right-of-way process.

Capacity:

An interchange at Bangerter Highway would help east-west traffic.

Improvements to the intersection of 3500 South and Bangerter highway have been addressed in a separate study. The recommendation for a continuous flow intersection (the first in Utah) was approved and construction is expected to begin in spring 2007. The improvements of the preferred alternative for 3500 South will be built in coordination with those made at Bangerter Highway.

Multimodal Facilities:

Promoting bicycle travel is important. Could bike lanes be constructed as part of this project?

West Valley City has included a Class 1 bike facility between 2700 West and Redwood Road in its general plan. A bike lane will not be constructed as part of the 3500 South improvements but could be built by the city as future development occurs. A five-foot sidewalk will be built on the north and south sides of 3500 South. This is wider than the standard four-foot sidewalk and will make for greater ease of bicycle travel than what currently exists on the corridor.

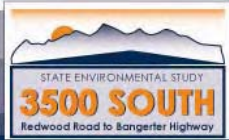
Right of Way:

Widening 3500 South will be too impactive to my property. Please widen to the opposite side of the street.

All alternatives will be modeled and evaluated to determine which will provide the greatest mobility benefits with the fewest impacts. Unfortunately, properties will be affected regardless of which alternative is chosen but will be minimized to the greatest extent possible. All impacts will be fully mitigated.

The wider alternative at 3600 West is preferred to reduce impacts.

Improving safety on the corridor is a primary element of purpose and need and will be one of the greatest considerations in choosing a preferred alignment. Reducing impacts to properties has also been stated as a primary concern. If the transit alternative is chosen, improvements at 3600 West will be made based on the best long-term solution that provides the greatest mobility and safety for all modes of transportation without excessive impacts.



What will happen if widening the corridor causes my business to lose needed parking spaces?

West Valley City is committed to the success of its business community and UDOT is working hard toward that effort as well. Every feasible option to minimize impacts to properties, including impacts to parking and circulation, will be explored. West Valley City has expressed a willingness to work with businesses that could potentially experience such impacts.

Safety:

Make 3100 South a truck route and keep truck traffic off of 3500 South to prevent wrecks with cars.

Because the 3500 South corridor is largely a business corridor, it is important that trucks continue to have safe access to the roadway. Additionally, moving the traffic to 3100 South would increase impacts to the largely residential community and could introduce increased hazards for pedestrians and students.

Transit:

Opinions about dedicating lanes for transit use seemed to be evenly divided between those who supported the idea and those who opposed it. Those who supported a transit option were equally split about which option they preferred – center-running or side-running BRT. Both views are summarized here.

Center-running BRT is a bad idea. Transit lanes should be built on the sides of the street for better safety and emergency access.

Careful consideration is being given to both center and side running alternatives. Evaluation of a curb-separated, center-running BRT service shows that emergency vehicles will not be impacted if this alternative is chosen. Active communication with the local police, fire, and Pioneer Valley Hospital officials has resulted in support of either transit alternative (**refer to 5.2.1**).

Transit should be promoted in this corridor. Center-running BRT is the best option.

Careful consideration is being given to both center and side running alternatives. If the transit alternative is chosen, the exact alignment will in large part depend on the financial partnership of UTA. It will also be based on which alignment offers the most benefits and the least impacts for both vehicular and transit mobility.

Better bus shelters should be provided.

Bus shelters and bus stops are the responsibility of UTA. However, UTA and UDOT have coordinated to design a more multi-modal corridor that includes improved conditions for transit vehicles and transit riders. Although better stations and shelters will be installed based on the funding and timing constraints of UTA, the 3500 South study does include considerations for the location and needs of future stations.

TRAX should not be located on 3500 South.

Light rail is not a part of this study and is not included in any of the alternatives.

Aesthetics:

Will the utilities be buried?

Burying utilities is not typically a part of roadway reconstruction projects. However, UDOT is working with West Valley City to implement this city goal in coordination with the 3500 South project. Power lines will be buried as part of construction activities provided West Valley City has funding available to pay the improvement costs.

Create a sense of arrival and improve the visual quality of this area as the city's downtown.

UDOT and West Valley City are working together to make improvements to the visual quality of the 3500 South corridor that include improved landscaping and/or decorative pavement, buried power lines, consolidated accesses, street lighting, and better facilities for pedestrians and transit.

Construction:

How long will construction take place? What is the construction schedule?

The actual time the corridor is under construction will depend on the schedule and construction phases the contractor sets for the project. Currently, the proposed construction schedule for this project is: Phase 1 from 2700 West to Redwood Road to begin in the spring of 2007 and Phase 2 from Bangerter to 2700 West to begin in the spring of 2008.

Will the proposed scheduling information be made available to these owners to allow them to make lease negotiations with tenants?

UDOT will provide the design and advertisement schedule along with general construction scheduling information to property owners.



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